

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-13 have been cancelled. Claims 14 and 15 have been amended. Claims 23 and 24 have been added.

The Examiner rejected claims 14-20 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kousuke Miyoshi (U.S. Patent No. 5,660,673). Claim 14 has been amended to further recite a dielectric focus ring with an upper surface and surrounding an outer periphery of the electrode and an outer periphery of the wafer wherein the upper surface of the dielectric focus ring is below an upper surface of the wafer and wherein the barrier is of a dielectric material and surrounds at least part of the focus ring where the barrier is adjusted to the upper surface of the focus ring. Nothing in Kousuke Miyoshi discloses a dielectric focus ring and adjusting the barrier layer with respect to the focus ring. For at least these reasons, claim 14, as amended is not anticipated by Kousuke Miyoshi.

The Examiner rejected claims 21-22 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kousuke Miyoshi (U.S. Patent No. 5,660,673).

Dependent claims 15-22 are also patentably distinct from the cited references for at least the same reasons as those recited above for the independent claim, upon which they ultimately depend. These dependent claims recite additional limitations that further distinguish these dependent claims from the cited reference.

New claims 23 and 24 further recite that in one position an upper surface of the barrier is not higher than the upper surface of the dielectric focus ring.

Applicants believe that all pending claims are allowable and respectfully request a Notice of Allowance for this application from the Examiner. Should the Examiner believe that a

telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the undersigned can be reached at telephone number (831) 655-2300.

Respectfully submitted,
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